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SUBJECT Strength, Training and Morale
of the East Berlin Police

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1. The Berlin East Sector police has at present a T/O strength of approximately 12,000. The actual strength, however, is considerably less, since the number of vacancies caused by the present wave of dismissals amounts to about 2,500. This shortage of personnel has been dealt with practically by transferring various administrative fields to the Magistrat. The new police T/O for 1951 thus provides for approximately 10,000 East Berlin police.
2. The goal of the police is to form from these 10,000 men and women an apparatus, similar to a military force, which will be ready for action at any given moment. For this purpose it is necessary that each male member, and at present every female member, of the Berlin police be:
 - A. so trained that he can be committed individually or in a group, in ordinary police action or militarily, and
 - B. politically and ideologically so reliable that he is ready to be committed in any operation, even though it be against other Germans.
3. Police and Military Training:

A. Every new police candidate, except special technicians and secretarial help, must spend the first twelve weeks of his police career in the training battalion (Lehrbataillon) in Berlin-Köpenick, Seelenbinderstr. Here the candidate receives basic military and political training for service in the Uniformed Constabulary (Schutzpolizei). The military instruction corresponds to the former individual and squad training given recruits in the German Army, without, however, instruction in the use of the machine gun. Weapons training is confined to theory and practice with the carbine and pistol '08. Commands and orders are the same as the former military, except that instead of the command for extended order drill, the order to form cordons for the employment of police units in controlling large assemblies and public demonstrations, is used. The training is given in accordance with standard Prussian drill methods, albeit without the severity and pomp which

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characterized the Prussian system. The police students themselves live in barracks.

B. After the twelve weeks of basic training, the candidate is transferred to the Uniformed Constabulary or the Criminal Police. Advanced training is given later at the Volkspolizei school at Berlin-Oberschöneweide, where technical police instruction and military training on the platoon level are offered. At this school, too, the students are quartered in barracks for the duration of the twelve-week advanced courses.

C. In addition to the Oberschöneweide instruction, there is a special course for members of the Criminal Police at the police school in Arnswalde, Poland. This training is largely technical and political, and each employee of the Criminal Police is supposed to attend the school.

D. Formerly, individual officers of the Berlin police were sent to the advanced police school at Kochstedt to take part in the platoon leader training given there. Since 1 October 1950, all officers to the rank of VP Meister of the Berlin police must take part in a fourteen-day course, four hours per day, at the Oberschöneweide school. This instruction includes the following:

- 1). Squad and platoon exercises, with each student taking his turn as commander of the unit. (2 hours).
- 2). Guard detail in theory and mounting the guard. (1 hour).
- 3). Weapons instruction, to include pistols of all types. (1 hour).

This course will last approximately six months, since all officers cannot be taken from their normal duties at one time. Up to the present, actual firing practice has been badly neglected, with the result that few policemen can be considered proficient in the use of weapons.

E. In addition to these courses, constant instruction of all police employees is currently being given within the framework of the so-called program of mass education (Breitenschulung). This includes:

- 1). Technical training - 2 hours per week
- 2). Political training - 2 hours per week
- 3). Sport or military drill - 2 hours per week, alternately
- 4). Weapons instruction - 1 hour per week

Until recently, participation by police employees in sports, military drill, and weapons training was so lax and spiritless that intensive control had to be instituted. Instructors for the mass training are chosen from among the participants, there being no permanent teachers. The teaching aids and material are prepared by the police school and Abteilung Polit/Kultur, Referat Schulung und Erziehung, the latter receiving its material from Hauptabteilung P/K, Hauptverwaltung für Deutsche Volkspolizei.

4. Political Training:

It is the task of political training to influence every policeman to such an extent that he is ideologically convinced of the unconditional necessity of committing his life, weapon in hand, for the executive power to which he is subordinate. Embellished ideologically, this means that the policeman must be ready to serve the socialist philosophy and the progressive sector of humanity, against the capitalistic, imperialistic Western powers, including West German and West Berlin organs of government. To this end nearly every day, in one form or another, political propaganda is spread among the police members, be it through formal instruction,

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resolutions passed in assemblies with regard to events of the day, official conferences, holidays, parades, special pledges, collection of money, voluntary Sunday work in the VEB's, or collaboration in making up the wall newspapers. More important than any of these, however, is the effort to induce all police members to join the SED.* In addition, membership in one of the mass organizations (FDJ, DFB, or Society for German-Soviet Friendship) is strongly urged. The more important police positions from Referat Leiter on may be held only by SED members, while all Abteilungsleiter must of necessity be politically very active, i.e., Party activists, in order to retain their positions.

Only with Party membership does the total ideological indoctrination begin. Since the Berlin Volkspolizei now is forming an individual, centrally directed Party organization, Party work is as strictly regulated and controlled as is the general police discipline. Party and police discipline are thereby coordinated to such an extent that the police executives, through a Party order, can force an employee who wishes to resign from the police to remain in his position. In like manner, unexcused absences from shop group assemblies (regular meetings or instruction evenings) are considered offences against the police duty obligation, since "Party work is duty in the Volkspolizei", because "only the combination of political consciousness and technical ability can enable the policeman to perform his duty".

The newly ordained SED "year of learning" will create within the Berlin Volkspolizei new possibilities for further political orientation, since non-SED employees are being urged to participate. That means that police members are being exposed to Communist instruction for an additional two to three hours every fourteen days.

5. Morale:

In spite of the intensive political indoctrination to which the police are subjected, and in spite of the increasing military and physical training, the Berlin Volkspolizei, taken as a whole, does not represent a very potent fighting force for the following reasons:

A. The attitude of the Berliner and the Berlin atmosphere are not conducive to strict adherence by police members to the restrictions laid down by the police executives. The regulation forbidding Volkspolizei from having contact with the people of West Berlin is often violated. The Party has also ordered its members to refrain from listening to any Western radio broadcasts. Nevertheless, many of the higher police officials hear only RIAS and have admitted as much in conversations with other officers.

B. Dissatisfaction within the ranks of the Berlin Volkspolizei is also furthered by the recent policy of dismissing all policemen who have been POW's of the Western Powers. This basic mood of resentment is heightened by the fact that in some instances of dismissal the reason given for the action stressed that the employee was being released because he had a cousin or other relative residing in Western Germany or in West Berlin, while, in reality, he may have been dropped because of inability to handle his duties. The feeling of economic insecurity is thus widespread because the individual employee can never be sure upon his arrival at work in the morning whether he still has a job or is already dismissed. The added fact that the dismissals are currently being made with no regard to the legal notification of release, which calls for thirty days notice, has contributed to a general feeling of indifference and apathy.

C. The Volkspolizei personnel policy, characterized by frequent transfers of employees from one Abteilung to another or, within an Abteilung, from one Referat to another, is also a cause for dissatisfaction within the police. Many police members express

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resentment when, barely familiar with the work of their section, they are arbitrarily transferred to another field without due regard for their technical ability.

D. Insecurity is also felt as a result of the completely one-sided relationship between the police president, who enjoys all the prerogatives of his position, and the employee, who, duty-bound for three years, has no legal rights. In addition, there is no fixed settlement concerning compensation or insurance for loss of work caused by accidents suffered in line of duty. In such cases, the policeman feels himself dependent on the mercy of the higher executives, an attitude which again leads to a feeling of economic insecurity.

E. Finally, there exists within the Berlin Volkspolizei considerable resentment directed against the Polit/Kultur Abteilung in connection with the chances for promotion. Members of other sections regard P/K employees as overzealous party workers who, although they have little technical ability, are promoted the fastest to officer rank. For these reasons, police morale, when measured against a willingness to be committed in any action, is not high. This also applies to 85 per cent of the SED members within the Berlin Volkspolizei, who, in the truest sense of the word, are only fellow travelers and have joined the Party to protect their positions and to be able to qualify for the higher-salaried offices. This means that in the event of any serious large-scale action in Berlin, the Soviet Sector police organization would in all probability, as of the present, disintegrate as an efficient fighting force. The higher officials have also partially recognized this; they will not depart from their stated principles and convictions, but they are attempting to better morale by choosing younger, more fanatic FDJ and SED members for police positions. In addition, all office work is supposed gradually to be turned over to women employees, thereby freeing male policemen for regular duties.

* Comment: Although 80 per cent of the East Berlin police are Party members, complete membership will probably not be attained until pressure is brought to bear on non-members.

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